

V. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



A. INTRODUCTION

Strategic Initiatives outline necessary and appropriate actions and goals to meet San Antonio's needs for facilities and programs in order to create a great Parks and Recreation System. In order to develop Strategic Initiatives that reflect community priorities, input was solicited from members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board at several Board meetings over a one year period. In addition, 20 public meetings were held in April and May 2004, and March 2005 to receive community comments. The resulting Strategic Initiatives summarize the vision and hopes of citizens and staff for the parks and recreation system in the coming ten years. These are consistent with the Department's budget priorities adopted by Council. Each Strategic Initiative section is divided into two components. First, the Strategic Initiative is clearly stated, followed by general Objectives. All parks and recreation operations and programs are addressed to include park maintenance, recreation services, park police/security, golf, special facilities, and capital improvements.

B. STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 1

Plan, develop and sustain a diversified, balanced, and well-conditioned citywide system of public parks and recreation facilities.

1. Continue implementation of the Parks and Recreation Strategic System Plan through the public input process.
2. Renovate, acquire, and develop park and recreation facilities through bond programs, CDBG, donations, grants, sales tax initiatives, and parkland dedications, especially in underserved areas.
3. Coordinate with other public and private entities in the acquisition, development and shared use of existing and/or new park and recreation facilities when in the public's best interest. Continue enhancement of partnerships with school districts for joint school/park facilities and programs. Maximize multi-purpose use of floodplains for Stormwater and park/open space applications. Accomplish capital improvement projects and program partnerships with the Alamo Community College District, San Antonio River Authority, San Antonio Water System, Texas Parks and Wildlife, Parks Foundation, etc.
4. Complete the 1999 and 2003 Parks Improvement Bond Program to include coordination and partnerships with other City departments, i.e., Library, Public Works.
5. Coordinate completion of the Sales Tax and Park Bond initiatives to acquire land along the Salado and Leon Creeks, Medina River, and other creek based linear parks and appropriately develop, maintain, and secure these sites. This will create a unique interconnected linear park system encircling the entire city, with the San Antonio River as it's central core.
6. Develop urban, neighborhood, and cultural parks adjacent to and connecting with the San Antonio River Improvement Project and developed Creekways, as a means for citizens to easily access the San Antonio River, Creekways, and individual neighborhood centers.
7. Coordinate completion of the Sales Tax initiative to acquire land over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, and appropriately develop, maintain, and secure these sites to protect our water supply and create open park space. Link sites such as Government Canyon State Natural Area, Windgate Ranch, Rancho Diana, Friedrich Park, and any future properties into an urban open space system.

V. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



8. Effectively utilize and monitor the Unified Development Code Parkland Dedication Ordinance to ensure the availability of neighborhood parks where new development is occurring.
9. Enhance automated systems in order to quantify and qualify job tasks and specific job costs in coordination with Enterprise Resource Management (ERM) systems.
10. Improve the efficiency and level of park maintenance through internal improvement, competition and community partnerships with individuals, corporations and government agencies.
11. Improve the appearance of urban areas with the increased usage of public art, reforestation, and enhanced landscape planting and maintenance.

C. STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 2

Ensure equitable access and maximize usage of parks and recreation facilities.

1. Assure a city-wide park system that is accessible to everyone regardless of location, physical ability, or income level, specifically addressing underserved areas.
2. Maximize appropriate usage of existing properties and develop multiple use facilities in order to increase efficiency and usage. (Natural areas, golf courses, quarries, creekways, undeveloped parks, etc...)
3. Rehabilitate and upgrade existing facilities that are not in compliance with current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards to ensure accessibility to all citizens.
4. Enhance recreation programs for special populations.
5. Enhance marketing efforts by providing easily accessible information to the public regarding the facilities and programs offered and provide convenient citizen access to the facility reservation system, to include utilization of the City's Community Link Centers.
6. Maximize the on-line reservation system and golf reservations system to facilitate customer access and maximize facility usage.
7. Develop an annual customer survey for parks and recreational facilities and programs to determine community needs.

D. STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 3

Provide quality recreation and cultural program opportunities for all users.

1. Cooperate with public and private agencies to encourage shared use of recreational facilities owned by the City, school districts, institutions and other public agencies to reduce duplication and maximize resources.
2. Provide increased opportunities for youth and adults to participate in our athletic, aquatic, golf cultural and other recreational programs, especially in regards to improving youth physical fitness.
3. Modify or establish programs to meet particular community/neighborhood needs by utilizing demographic, crime, and health data, surveys, and program evaluations.

V. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



4. Implement quality enhancements to the after school challenge program and the summer recreation programs in regard to Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS) standards.
5. Expand the Therapeutic Recreation Program to offer activities for youth with disabilities and implement a more diverse program to include tennis, aquatics, golf, and wheel chair sports.

E. STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 4

Ensure that municipal parks and recreation facilities are safe for all users.

1. Provide the level of Park Police presence needed to enforce existing ordinances such as Park Curfew, Park Alcohol Restrictions and ensure safety in City parks.
2. Increase Park Police skills by providing increased training.
3. Increase the number of Park Police Officers and enhance methods to adequately patrol newly acquired park acreage and facilities.
4. Address crime at parks and recreation facilities through coordinated security measures with other local law enforcement entities and citizen awareness and partnership programs.
5. Abate graffiti from department facilities and public and private property in the immediate vicinity of targeted areas.
6. Determine deterrent strategies such as lighting, signage, landscaping, design, etc. at facilities in order to reduce graffiti and vandalism.

F. STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 5

Maximize financial efficiencies and ensure contractual compliance.

1. Prepare Requests for Proposals (RFP's), contracts, and intergovernmental agreements to maximize service delivery and financial return to the City.
2. Through organizational enhancements, improve monitoring of financial and performance milestones as stipulated in these contractual and permit obligations.
3. Coordinate the negotiation and re-negotiation of essential department contracts with the City Attorney's Office and the Contract Services Department.

G. STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 6

A.

Enhance the City's prominence as a major visitor destination.

1. Continue to manage and maintain the River Walk as a world-class attraction, taking into account any improvements, linkages and expansions. Coordinate with the Convention and Visitors Bureau, Paseo del Rio Association, Centro San Antonio, contractors, businesses, and property owners.

V. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



2. Develop the San Antonio River Improvement Project from Brackenridge Park to Mission Espada to create the most unique urban linear park in the country. This project will spur private economic development along the entire length of the River.
3. Coordinate operations of the San Antonio River Improvement Project as those improvements are made during the next several years, to include maintenance, river operations, security, utilities, contracts, etc.
4. Promote and improve departmental tourist/cultural facilities, i.e., La Villita, HemisFair Park, Spanish Governor's Palace and Market Square, through program, interpretive and concession enhancements.
5. Working with the Botanical Society, develop a comprehensive plan for future development, expansion, programming and increased attendance for the Botanical Gardens.
6. Develop and promote eco-tourism opportunities at natural areas, creek and river corridors, in conjunction with other agencies, i.e., Audubon Society, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, San Antonio River Authority, Convention and Visitors Bureau, etc...
7. Continue improvement in the promotion, maintenance, and financial condition of municipal golf operations.